

The Kirkby-on-Bain Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120623
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	313698
Inspection dates	16–17 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Rosemary Eaton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	96
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	15
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Brewster
Headteacher	Mr Peter Douglas
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2004
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wharf Lane Kirkby-on-bain Woodhall Spa LN10 6YW
Telephone number	01526 352715

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small rural primary school. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are White British and there are very few in the early stages of learning to speak English. A higher than average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school's Reception class caters for 15 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There is no school hall but use is made of accommodation in the village Nursery for two afternoons each week. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools accreditation and the Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Aspects of its work have outstanding features. The Reception class provides extremely well for children in the EYFS and pupils' exceptional personal development is a feature of the entire school. Pupils are adamant that they enjoy school. They derive enormous pleasure from their friends and the excellent relationships they have with staff. At every turn, pupils demonstrate their enthusiasm for school life. They readily undertake a myriad of responsibilities such as being 'Early Bird' monitors, playground buddies and play leaders. By fulfilling tasks such as these, pupils make a remarkable contribution to the school community. Their caring attitudes to younger or more vulnerable pupils reflect the good care, guidance and support the school provides. Staff know each pupil very well and notice quickly if they appear troubled. Pupils have confidence in the staff and this helps them to feel safe in school. Additionally, they develop an impressive awareness of safety, as pedestrians or cyclists, for example.

The school takes full account of pupils' views. They are frequently invited to air their opinions on topics such as after school and lunchtime clubs: 'They are fun and we get to spend more time with our friends.' The vast majority of pupils are tremendously keen to take part in physical activities, reflecting their striking knowledge of healthy lifestyles. They successfully lobbied for a session of physical activity to take place before school on one morning each week and this is extremely well attended. Leaders ensure that whilst firmly rooted in its local area, the school is outward looking and informs pupils about national and global issues, such as poverty. This is one facet of its good contribution to community cohesion.

When they join the Reception year, children's skills vary greatly but are broadly in line with the expectations for their age. Their learning gets off to an extremely rapid start in the EYFS and pupils make good progress thereafter, reaching above average standards overall at the end of Year 6. In writing, progress is satisfactory rather than good and standards are broadly average. Pupils achieve well during their time in school because the quality of teaching is good. Lessons involve interesting and relevant activities. This is why pupils are so quick to point out that learning is fun. Teachers have high expectations for all pupils. However, activities for the highest attainers are sometimes no more demanding than those of pupils whose targets are set lower.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher sees that all aspects of the school's performance are monitored carefully, providing an accurate picture of strengths and areas requiring further development. Subsequent actions, such as recent steps to improve spelling, are supported wholeheartedly by staff and are invariably effective. This teamwork contributes to the school's good capacity for continued improvement. Governors help to make certain the school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The EYFS provision meets children's needs extremely well. When they join the class, their skills are broadly in line with expectations. Typically, their early attempts at writing is a weaker area. Children often make all round outstanding individual progress, so that the proportion exceeding expectations is much higher by the end of the EYFS. The small number of children means that they get plenty of individual attention. However, staff promote independence extremely successfully and children's personal, social and emotional development is especially strong.

Staff care for children well so they are confident learners. Regular opportunities to join the rest of the school, for example, to talk about their achievements, provide a further boost to children's self-confidence. Teaching is outstanding. The teacher has particular expertise in using questions to advance children's learning with no opportunity missed to develop skills and consolidate understanding. Outside on a breezy day, one child used a pot of paint to anchor a piece of paper. The teacher immediately seized the chance to involve children in a discussion about 'heavy' and 'light', accompanied by an enjoyable action song. The extremely well planned curriculum is adapted flexibly according to children's interests. A treasured Christening photograph was the starting point for an exploration of the village church. The teacher leads and manages the provision outstandingly well. Staff gather accurate and meaningful information about children's learning, valuing and fully utilising parents' observations.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress and raise standards in writing
- Ensure that teaching consistently demands more of higher attaining pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards tend to vary from year-to-year because year groups are very small and each pupil's attainment has a significant impact on averages. Nevertheless, standards are typically above average. They are particularly high in reading but are also above average in mathematics and science. Pupils' progress is best in reading. It is slowest in writing because they do not always remember to apply skills they have learned, such as when writing complex sentences. Pupils who find learning most difficult progress well from their individual starting points. However, not all of the highest attaining pupils make consistently good progress. This is reflected in their mixed success in reaching the highest National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils in the early stages of learning the English language often make rapid progress because the school works hard to secure help for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They demonstrate their capacity to think hard about important issues during 'discussion' assemblies. For example, pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 appreciate that education can help people escape from poverty. Pupils' decision to use the prize money from an environmental competition to buy water-saving taps stemmed from their concern about lack of water in some other countries. Behaviour is good overall although occasionally it is excellent. Pupils comment that 'most people are really friendly'. Attendance is above average. The school council is very active. Its members consult widely before making decisions, for example about playground equipment. After visiting a wildlife park, pupils in Years 3 and 4 organised a day of fund-raising to sponsor endangered creatures such as iguanas. Enterprises such as these help to prepare pupils very well for their future lives. Pupils are acutely aware of the importance of a healthy diet and are quite clear about which foods they can enjoy freely and those to eat in moderation.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers often seek out real-life starting points for learning. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 thoroughly enjoy using information and communication technology to create presentations about the village, following investigations into its history and geography. Teaching assistants are fully aware of how to support learning. They regularly use their initiative, for example, when pupils need extra help or encouragement. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils to work together, for instance, to explain their ideas to each other. Talking to a partner helped pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop their understanding of language used in mathematics as they discussed how to negotiate a grid to reach treasure. Systems to assess pupils' learning are well organised. The information gathered is often used well, for example to group pupils for particular activities. Teachers expect more able learners to produce work at a higher level than that of other pupils. However, they sometimes leave too much to chance, by not making these expectations clear enough or not providing tasks that allow these highest attaining pupils to reach the levels of which they are capable.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has a clear and relevant focus on English and mathematics but gives all subjects enough time to give pupils worthwhile experiences. Pupils' personal development is promoted particularly well. For example, they benefit from visits by parents to talk about their job or faith. This helps pupils to appreciate other people's lifestyles and the diverse nature of the local and wider community. Pupils greatly enjoy the varied clubs offered from the Reception year onwards. Three recorder groups meet and the after-school sports club regularly attracts over half the pupils. Strong links with other schools enable pupils to belong to teams and represent their school. The needs of pupils who find learning particularly difficult or for whom English is an additional language are met well. The school is working to provide more opportunities for pupils to consolidate and apply important skills during lessons in all subjects. For example, numeracy does not feature strongly enough in lessons other than mathematics.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Current safeguarding requirements are met. Child protection arrangements are securely in place and staff are fully trained. Procedures to promote good behaviour are comprehensive. Pupils are involved in establishing charters for their class group. Those in Years 3 and 4 consider that they have a right to be 'spoken to nicely'. Pupils know exactly how to respond if they have concerns and are confident that staff will help them. A range of agencies is involved in helping the school to support pupils and provision for those who find learning especially difficult is well organised. Fortnightly meetings between staff and parents enable information about any pupil to be shared efficiently. Pupils' academic progress is tracked carefully and interventions are made when they seem to be faltering. Individual targets are in place for writing and have recently been introduced in mathematics. Marking of pupils' work is encouraging, but does not routinely refer to these targets or indicate to pupils how they can improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong and informed leadership, clearly focused on raising standards. He has overseen good improvement since the previous inspection, for example, in the attainment and achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2. Staff share this drive, together with a commitment to ensuring that pupils are well-rounded individuals who are very well prepared for their lives beyond school. The school promotes community cohesion well, for example by ensuring that pupils from all backgrounds are fully involved. Teachers contribute fully to evaluating the school's performance and establishing plans to move it forward. Teaching assistants are not directly involved in this work. Monitoring by the headteacher and subject leaders have identified the need to improve pupils' performance in writing and to consistently challenge higher attaining pupils. Governance is good. Governors are enthusiastic and very supportive. A number visit the school regularly and find out about its performance at first hand. Many parents are extremely enthusiastic about the school, typically describing it as 'very friendly and nurturing'.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

20 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Kirkby-on-Bain CE Primary School, Woodhall Spa, LN10 6YW

Thank you for being so welcoming when I visited your school. I thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and I would especially like to thank the members of the school council for their help. This letter is to tell you what I found out about the school.

Yours is a good primary school. One of the very best things about it is your own personal development, which is outstanding. I was extremely impressed by all the responsibilities you have. Jobs such as monitors or playground buddies help other pupils and the staff. You know a great deal about healthy living and keeping safe, and you are very well prepared for your lives after you leave the school.

The children in the Reception class get a brilliant start to their education. You all make good progress from Year 1 to Year 6, because the teaching is good. Your teachers know that you don't do as well in writing as in reading, mathematics and science. I have asked the school to improve your standards and progress in writing. I noticed that sometimes those of you who learn fastest don't have harder work than other pupils. I would like the school to make sure that you all have work that is hard enough. You can help by always trying your best.

You told me how much you enjoy school. This is because your headteacher and the staff work so hard to provide you with interesting things to do, inside and outside lessons. I was amazed to see so many of you at the after-school sports club.

I want to send my best wishes to each of you and to the staff.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Eaton

Lead inspector